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The President's Daily Brief

April 20, 1976

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~~*Top Secret*~~ 25X1

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LEBANON: *Top Christian leaders made clear yesterday that they are unhappy over their exclusion from the negotiations leading to the recent agreement between Syria and the Palestinians. They fear that Syria may have made unacceptable concessions to the Palestinians and the Lebanese left.*

The Christians reportedly have strong reservations about the provision in the accord that rejects participation by Western powers in any renewed mediation. They probably also are worried about Syria's alleged agreement to begin withdrawing its troops from Lebanon. Their deepest suspicions are almost certainly aroused by the possibility that Arafat and the Syrians reached an understanding on the contentious issue of the status of the fedayeen in Lebanon. 25X1

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Phalanges Party leader Jumayyil seems prepared to abide by the cease-fire, at least temporarily, and to explore further the implications of the Syrian-Palestinian agreement. Phalanges representatives attended the meeting of the joint truce commission yesterday, and Phalanges militiamen have been ordered to honor the new truce, which went into effect yesterday. Interior Minister Shamun's representatives, however, continue to boycott the commission.

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There are still no indications that Syria has withdrawn any of its military forces from Lebanon, despite press reports of a pull-back.

The US defense attache in Damascus noted little change in the disposition of Syrian troops yesterday morning when he visited the border near the Syrian command post opposite Al Masna.

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NOTES

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Thailand

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Turkish

Greek

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India

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Pakistan

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